Mills Society in Williams College 14 June 1837

To the Socy of Inquiry on Missions &c in Princeton Theol Semy

Beloved Brethren in the Lord,

We believe that hitherto no correspondence has been opened between the societies to which we respectively belong. We have in our Library one or two letters, written many years ago, by individuals interested in the cause of Missions, connected with your Seminary, letters of much interest and shewing in the writers an uncommon strength of attachment to the cause of the Redeemer. We take this early opportunity of thanking you for writing us and should be pleased to open and continue a correspondence with you on the important subject in which we feel a deep interest.

We have always found it profitable to receive letters from other institutions, and from private individuals.

Within the present College year our society has written to and received letters from many of the Colleges in New England and in the Western States.

The subject of Missions in them is receiving the attention of many of those preparing for the ministry. In Marion College, Mo, the Missionary Society (Foreign) is in quite a flourishing condition. It numbers about twenty members.

The Mills Society in this College numbers at present more individuals ~~at~~ ~~present~~ than it has for four years past. Our object is twofold. Missions at home and abroad. What proportion of our number expects to go abroad I am unable to say. I hope the majority of the members love the heathen with a strength and a sincerity that will never abate until their feet are firmly planted on heathen soil.

We meet regularly once in two weeks on Sabbath Evening. Our meetings are generally very interesting; and exert a happy influence on the brethren of the Society, perhaps no other meeting produces _that kind_ of impression that is produced in our society meetings. We number at present about 14 members who have pledged themselves, if the Providence of God does not otherwise order, either to Home or to Foreign Missions.

We have in College about sixty professors of religion. Of these probably three fourths now have the ministry in view. I do not think that the cause of Missions receives from the brethren here in general that serious and prayerful attention which it demands. It seems to be the settled policy of the majority of christians here, as it is also in all the churches, to leave with a few individuals ~~the~~ "to endure the burden and heat of the day." Such has been our Experience. Not only in the churches in this vicinity does such a spirit prevail, - but in every part of the country. The great body of the professed disciples have other employment and other business to which they give their almost undivided attention

The state of religion in this region is low and disheartening. In the compass of ten miles placing Williamstown in the centre, though the population is by no means sparse, what few churches ~~there are~~ Exist, are in a cold and cheerless condition No revivals, nothing Effective is doing for Christ. The church in this place may be set down as an exception. Within the bosom of the church here there are many active members, who love the Redeemer's cause; men of large souls, who sustain the cause of benevolence and seem to possess the spirit of Christ. But let a christian traverse this region for 10 or 15 miles around and a scene of moral waste and desolation will shew itself perhaps un paralleled in any other part of New England. Williamstown is comparatively a verdant spot. But in our neighborhood hardly a ~~single~~ vestige of Christianity can be seen. The sabbath is not observed as rigidly and faithfully as it should be. The students in College have always kept up sabbath schools and meetings in and about the town.

From the foregoing brief statements you will find answers to the several questions proposed in your letter. We do hope for better times. There is less immorality in this College at present than there has been for years. We trust in the Lord that times of spiritual refreshings will once more return and gladden the hearts of God's people, and when the glory of God shall be promoted in the conviction and conversion of impenitent sinners.

We feel that the cause of missions, of Foreign Missions in particular, is at present in a straitened and an extremely embarrassing condition. The faith of the church on the promises of the Bible, and the strength of her attachment to Christ, and t[illegible] the undying souls of the perishing heathen, is now brought to the test.

If God's people love his cause, if they desire the prosperity of Zion above their chief good, what little of this world's goods God has entrusted to their management will be surrendered, cheerfully to advance its interests.

The cause of Christ, we doubtless all feel, is little regarded in these times: The divisions which are sundering the bonds of the Church, and disturbing her peace and unity; the general apathy and indifference every where apparent even within the pale of the Church, call for repentance and deep mourning of heart, and a renewal of Covenant engagements on the part of God's people. God can bring order out of confusion, light out of darkness, holiness out of unholiness. And we sincerely believe that this is his purpose with regard to our American Israel, and that though clouds and thick darkness now

away over the Church, the day will come when Christ will lift up his Church out of the dust, when she will become beautiful and glorious in the eyes of all the world.
In the accomplishment of Christ's purposes of mercy much depends upon the character of the instruments or agents employed. We probably all feel that an intelligent and a pious instrumentality only should be employed in the work of saving souls.

Mr E D G Prime
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We rejoice brethren that we are afforded this opportunity of mingling our sympathies together, and of interchanging views ~~of~~ in regard to personal duty and obligation.
We hope our communications to each other will be frequent; we shall feel grateful for ~~all~~ any missionary information you may have to communicate.
We have made it a practice for years to write to Foreign Missionaries from time to time and are favored with answers from ~~the missionaries~~ them. In behalf of Mills Socy

Yours in Christ L. Clark Cor Sec